(ISOPOPM) is under implementation since 01-04-2004. Under this scheme, assistance is provided for Production of breeder seed, foundation seed and certified seed, crash programme for quality seed production, distribution of certified seed, and Minikits, infrastructure development and integrated Pest Management. Besides, front line demonstrations on improved production technologies in oilseeds and pulses are being conducted through Indian Council of Agricultural Research as a transfer of technology effort among the farmers.

National Crop Forecasting Centres

2280. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up the National Crop Forecasting Centre;

(b) if so, the main purpose and function of the centre; and

(c) the extent to which it has been proved beneficial to farming community?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The scheme of National Crop Forecasting Centre (NCFC) was approved with the objective of providing an effective unified institutional framework for entire crop forecasting system in the country involving data flow from diverse channels for getting more accurate crop production estimates. The NCFC started functioning with effect from 3rd December, 1998.

The NCFC is mainly involved in coordinating the activities under the scheme "Forecasting of Agricultural output using Space, Agro-meteorology and Land based observations (FASAL). Further, NCFC also coordinates the activities under the project" Development of Extended Range Forecast System (ERFS) for Climate Risk Management in Agriculture" and holds meetings of the multi-disciplinary Crop Weather Watch Group (CWWG) every week to review the weather and crop situation, among others. The CWWG provides an effective institutional mechanism facilitating crucial inputs for tracking crop prospects and that of early warning.